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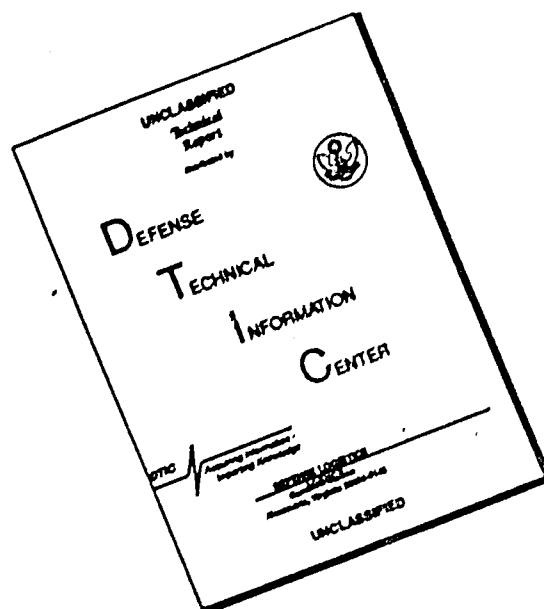
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AD389452

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DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
HEADQUARTERS, 54TH ARTILLERY GROUP  
APO San Francisco 96257

AVGC-C

11 13 Nov 66

SUBJECT: Operational Report for quarterly period ending 31 Oct 66.

Lessons Learned, Headquarters, 54th Artillery Group

THRU: Commanding Officer  
II Field Force Vietnam Artillery  
ATTN: AVFB-FAC  
APO 96227

Commanding General  
USARV  
ATTN: AVC-DH  
APO 96307

Commander-in Chief  
USARPAC  
ATTN: GPOP-MH  
APO 96558

TO: Assistant Chief of Staff for Forces Development  
Department of the Army  
Washington, DC 20310

APR 29 1968

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SECTION I

Headquarters and Headquarters Battery, 54th Artillery Group main body departed Fort Bragg, North Carolina 7 September 1966 in two groups. One group departed Pope Air Force Base by military charter aircraft and flew directly to San Francisco. The second group was transported by commercial bus to Raleigh - Durham airport and flew to San Francisco by commercial aircraft. The two groups met aboard the USS Butner. The Butner departed San Francisco on the morning of 8 September 1966 and arrived at Vung Tau on 30 September 1966. The main body debarked at Vung Tau and was transported by C-123 aircraft to Xuan Loc on 1 October 1966.

The advance party departed Fort Bragg on 17 September 1966 and arrived at Tan Son Nhut, Vietnam 20 September 1966. The advance party was met and sponsored by HQ, II FFV Arty.

Organic vehicles and other TO&E equipment departed Fort Bragg 11 August 1966 and arrived in Saigon 6 October 1966.

The 54th Artillery Group was staged in the base camp of the 2nd Bn, 35th Arty at Xuan Loc.

The 54th Artillery Group became operational on 20 October 1966 at Xuan Loc, Vietnam. The 2d Howitzer Battalion, 35th Artillery (155mm SP) was assigned to the group at this time. B Battery of this battalion was attached to the 1st Infantry Division for a series of operations in the Lai Khe area, starting on 9 September 1966. Operation Shenandoah West was in progress throughout the end of this reporting period. C Battery, 2d Bn, 35th Arty was in base camp at Xuan Loc during the period 20 October - 31 October 1966. A Battery, 2d Bn, 35th Arty was at Nui Dat with the mission of General Support II Field Force Vietnam, reinforcing 1st Field Regiment,

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loyal Australian artillery during this same period.

This headquarters controlled the fires of A Battery, 2d Bn, 32d Arty (a 175mm - 8" composite battery stationed at Xuan Loc) during the period 20 - 31 October 1966.

All ARVN artillery units normally based in Xuan Loc departed on 21 October to participate in NATIONAL DAY ceremonies in Saigon on 1 November. C battery, 2d Bn, 13th Artillery (105mm towed) was moved to Xuan Loc on 30 October with the mission of reinforcing 54th Artillery Group.

Since becoming operational, this headquarters has provided continuous liaison representation to the 10th ARVN Division (CSOC).

The advance party of the 7th Battalion, 9th Artillery arrived in Vietnam on 12 October. The advance party of the 1st Battalion, 83d Artillery arrived on 21 October. These battalions will be assigned to the group upon becoming operational.

## SECTION II

### Commander's Observations and Recommendations

#### Part 1. Observation:

##### A. Personnel

##### Quartering of Troops Aboard Ship

##### 1. Item: Assignment of troop quarters

Discussion: Troop compartments were not assigned so as to maintain unit integrity aboard ship prior to the arrival of units at Oakland Army Terminal, even though each unit submitted troop manifests in advance of departing home station.

Observation: This caused much confusion and changing of compartments among a number of units to obtain unit integrity.

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Personnel Section

2. Item: Planning for personnel sections prior to arrival in Vietnam.

Discussion: This headquarters planned prior to arrival in Vietnam not to consolidate the personnel sections of the group headquarters and its assigned artillery battalions.

Observation: Upon arrival in Vietnam the advance party discovered that transportation problems for incoming personnel and outgoing personnel for normal rotation purposes and R & R purposes prohibited the units in the group from maintaining personnel sections separately. The problems of getting payrolls to and from finance centers posed the same transportation problems. The geographic location of USAIW headquarters, the next higher headquarters administratively, also caused transportation problems for separate personnel sections. Accordingly, a consolidated Group Personnel Section was formed.

B. Operations:

Command and Control

3. Item: Helicopters

Discussion: Since this group became operational on 20 October, there have been incessant requirements for helicopter transportation. None of the roads leading out of the town where the group headquarters is based are secure for single vehicle travel.

There have been daily requirements for command, liaison, and operational control visits to subordinate units, which have base camps remote from this headquarters. Additionally, at least one battery has been away from its base camp continually during the period.

Neither the group headquarters nor the assigned battalions have assigned or attached aircraft.

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Observation: Lack of organic helicopters seriously hampers accomplishment of the Group's mission.

AN/CRC-46 "AM" Radio Antennas

4 Item: Use of auxiliary antenna for efficient communications between AN/CRC-46 "AM" Radios.

Discussion: The vehicular whip antenna, issued as the only component antenna to the AN/CRC-46 "AM" radio, is not sufficient as a single all purpose antenna when operating in the changing atmospheric conditions of Vietnam. The vehicle whip antenna operates satisfactorily only when ideal conditions exist, and only when utilizing voice and CW transmissions. On the other hand, the AN/GRA-4 antenna Group (FSN 5965 244 5147) gives excellent results in obtaining good sound signals, and in affording clear RTT print when using RTT emission with security equipment.

Observation: The AN/GRA-4 antenna Group can be obtained as a separate issue item, by giving adequate justification when requisitioning.

The "Doublet" Antenna may be employed as a field expedient, to obtain satisfactory RTT print, but will not give 360 degree coverage, as will the AN/GRA-4 antenna.

Modification of Tables of Organization and Equipment

5 Item: Modification of TOE's

Discussion: Many units are finding it necessary to modify tables of organization and equipment for effective operation in Vietnam. This headquarters has artillery battalions assigned and consequently is responsible for administrative and logistical functions of its subordinate units as well as provision of tactical control of them. TOE 6-401E

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does not provide sufficient personnel and equipment to carry out these administrative and logistical responsibilities. A request to modify the TOJ was submitted on 29 September 1966. A major change was inclusion of an aviation section.

Observation: Department of the Army could make available to a unit upon its being alerted the MTOJ of a like unit presently in South Vietnam. The unit, upon arrival in Vietnam would then be able to prepare and submit more expeditiously its MTOJ.

C. Intelligence:

Visual Reconnaissance (VR)

{ Item: Visual Reconnaissance

Discussion: The most positive target acquisition means, available to separate artillery groups and battalions, is visual reconnaissance with the O-1 aircraft as the VR vehicle. Ground observation effectiveness is reduced due to the heavy vegetation and jungle. Proper employment of the VR program gives a thorough knowledge of the terrain that would otherwise not be available. This knowledge increases the effectiveness of the group in directing fires and contributes to a productive harassment and interdiction program. For maximum effectiveness the following points have been helpful:

1. Observers have been assigned specific areas of coverage with a goal of daily observation of each area.
2. Registrations are fired using the observer from the fire unit registering.
3. Aircraft and VR times should be coordinated and controlled by the Group S2 to insure maximum area coverage daily.

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Observation: The VR program is hampered by the lack of organic aviation capability and night vision devices. All artillery units deploying to this theater must retain their aviation sections if an effective target acquisition and surveillance program is to be realized.

D. Logistics:

7 Item: Preparation for Overseas Movement

Discussion: Troops off-loading at Vung Tau are normally separated from their RED TAT equipment for several days after arrival in Vietnam. The implementation of AR 220-10 by COMUS transportation agencies precludes units from carrying certain essential and some desirable items as YELLOW TAT. Weight allowances should be increased to allow inclusion of the following items in YELLOW TAT: GP tents, cots, armor vests, mosquito nets, ammunition, C rations, and mess equipment.

Observation: Until off-loading facilities permit all TAT shipments to actually accompany troops throughout deployment, there should be an increase in the allowance of YELLOW TAT shipments from COMUS.

Generators, 60 Kw or Larger

8 Item: TOI for an Artillery Group Headquarters authorizes no generators 10 Kw and larger.

Discussion: In Vietnam the electrical requirements for an artillery group headquarters exceeds 50 Kw. The unit mess alone requires 10 Kw to run the refrigeration unit. Another 15 Kw generator is required to power the perimeter lights and operations building at night. If troops are to have lights in the billets an additional 15 Kw is needed. Maintenance facilities, electric typewriters, copiers and other administrative functions consume from 10 to 15 Kw. A combination of smaller generators

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(.5 Kw to 3 Kw) have proven too fragile and will not operate satisfactorily over prolonged periods.

Observation: It is essential that an artillery group headquarters be augmented with a sixty kilowatt generator while in Vietnam.

Part II. Recommendations:

1. Shipboard troop billet assignments be confirmed between port authorities and ship's crew before troops board.
2. Major subordinate units consolidate personnel sections in a geographic location near replacement depots, embarking and debarking airports, finance centers, and their next higher headquarters to facilitate their operations and reduce their transportation requirements.
3. One UH-1 type helicopter and one OH-23 type helicopter be assigned or attached to the group headquarters. One OH-23 type helicopter be assigned or attached to each battalion assigned to the group.
4. Units authorized Radio, AM, AN/CRC-46 submit requests for Antenna Group, AN/CRA-4 prior to departing COMUS.
5. MTO's of units in Vietnam be made available to like units in COMUS upon receipt of alert for deployment to Vietnam.
6. Each artillery group headquarters be provided with three O-1 type aircraft and each artillery battalion with two O-1 type aircraft.
7. Yellow disc TAT authorizations for units deploying to Vietnam be increased.
8. TO's be augmented to provide sufficient electrical output for each artillery unit before departing COMUS.

*Charles M. Mizell*  
CHARLES M. MIZELL  
Colonel, Artillery  
Commanding

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AVFB-FACO (13 Nov 66) 1st Ind  
SUBJECT: Operational Report for Quarterly Period ending 31 October  
1966, RCS-CSFOR-65 (U)

22 NOV 1966

DA, HQ, II FFFORCEV ARTY, APO 96266

THRU: Commanding General, II Field Force Vietnam, APO 96266

Commanding General, USARV, ATTN: AVC-DH, APO 96307

Commander-in-Chief, USARPAC, ATTN: GPOP-MH, APO 96558

TO: Assistant Chief of Staff for Forces Development, Department of  
the Army, Washington, D. C. 20310

1. (U) The quarterly report submitted by the 54th Artillery Group is considered adequate.
2. (U) Reference Section II, Part I A. The 23d Artillery Group has maintained a consolidated group personnel section for more than one year in Vietnam. This section has operated with considerable success, and a similar section such as the 23d and 54th Groups have organized is recommended for other artillery groups operating in Vietnam.
3. (U) Reference Section II, Part II, paragraphs 1 and 2; concur.
4. (C) Reference Section II, Part II, paragraphs 3 and 6. This headquarters strongly concurs in the recommendations contained in these paragraphs. The lack of helicopters seriously hampers command and control of widely dispersed artillery units. Target acquisition and observed fire capabilities are seriously impaired by the lack of observation aircraft. The recommended allocation is considered the minimum aircraft required to support these requirements. The group and battalions have initiated Modified Table of Organization and Equipment (MTOE) action to request these aircraft. This recommendation was also included in the Operational Report of this headquarters, dated 14 November 1966 and includes an explanation of actions taken to provide aircraft support for artillery units.



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AVFB-FACO (13 Nov 66)

1st Ind

SUBJECT: Operational Report for Quarterly Period ending 31 October 1966, RCS-CSFOR-65

5. (U) Reference Section II, Part II, paragraph 4; concur.

6. (U) Reference Section II, Part II, paragraph 5; concur. The problems encountered by one unit in Vietnam requiring an augmentation to its TOE will generally apply to other units organized under the same TOE. This headquarters will endeavor to make this information available to artillery units deploying to RVN for employment with II Field Force Vietnam Artillery.

7. (U) Reference Section II, Part II, paragraph 7; concur.

8. (U) Reference Section II, Part II, paragraph 8. It is not desirable to augment TOE of Artillery Units for additional electrical power sources before departing CONUS, as all requirements are not the same; however, provisions are made for the unit to request a power requirement survey after arrival in-country and then to request the proper generator to support the requirement.

*George R. Allin, Jr.*  
GEORGE R. ALLIN, Jr.  
Colonel, Artillery  
Commanding

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AVFBC-H (22 Nov 66) 2nd Ind  
SUBJECT: Operational Report for Quarterly Period Ending 31 October  
1966 (RCS-CSFOR-65 )(U)  
DA, HQ II Field Force Vietnam, APO San Francisco 96266 8 JAN 1967

THRU: Commanding General, USARV, ATTN: AVC-DH, APO 96307

Commander in Chief, US Army Pacific, ATTN: GPOP-MH, APO 96588

TO: Assistant Chief of Staff for Force Development, Dept of the  
Army, Washington, D.C., 20310

1. The Operational Report-Lessons Learned submitted by the 54th  
Artillery Group for the quarter ending 31 October 1966 is forwarded  
herewith.

2. This headquarters has reviewed subject report and the 1st  
Ind and concurs with the comments and action taken as stated in the  
basic report and the 1st Ind.

FOR THE COMMANDER:

1 Incl  
nc

*Wayne D. Blanton*  
WAYNE D. BLANTON  
WO-W1, USA  
Acting Asst AG

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AMHSC-DH (13 Nov 66) 3d Ind  
SUBJECT: Operational Report-Lessons Learned for the Period Ending  
31 October 1966 (RGS CSFOR-65)

HEADQUARTERS, UNITED STATES ARMY VIETNAM, APO San Francisco 96307 29 JAN 1967

TO: Commander in Chief, United States Army, Pacific, ATTN: GFOP-OT  
APO 96558

1. This headquarters has reviewed the Operational Report-Lessons Learned for the period ending 31 October 1966 from Headquarters, 54th Artillery Group as indorsed.

2. Pertinent comments are as follows:

a. Reference Paragraph B, Part I, Section II, Item: Helicopters; Paragraph 6, Part II, Section II; and Paragraph 8, 1st Indorsement: The requirement for aviation support for the 54th Artillery Group is recognized; however, all available USAFV assets have been expended. Until additional assets become available, aviation support must continue to be provided on a mission basis from present resources. Aviation requirements are being continuously evaluated and at such times as additional aircraft are received the needs of the 54th Artillery Group will be given careful consideration.

b. Reference Paragraph C, Part I, Section II, Item: Visual Reconnaissance: DA has directed that Combat Support and Combat Service Support units will deploy at 0 manning level. The units have not had their aviation sections deleted from the TOE. This headquarters has requested additional fixed wing aircraft for support of Combat Support and Combat Service Support units. When sufficient assets become available, support aircraft will be issued commensurate with aircraft availability and within existing priorities.

c. Reference Paragraph 4, Part II, Section II, Page 8 and Paragraph 5, 1st Indorsement: Concur.

d. Reference Paragraph 7, Part II, Section II: This office has no objection to increasing yellow disc TAT as recommended whenever feasible. However, in most instances cargo space aboard troop ships will not permit more than the minimum essential personal baggage

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AVHGC-DH (13 Nov 66)

SUBJECT: Operational Report-Lessons Learned for the Period Ending  
31 October 1966 (HCS CSFOR-65)

and yellow disc organizational equipment. Even more restrictive will be air deployments. Problems experienced in the past because of delayed receipts on organizational equipment are diminishing with improved shipping and port discharge and clearance capabilities.

e. Reference Paragraph 5, Part II, Section II and Paragraph 6, 1st Indorsement: MTOE requirements prior to deployment are not processed at this headquarters.

FOR THE COMMANDER:

  
W. J. THORNTON  
1st Lt, AGC  
Asst Adjutant General

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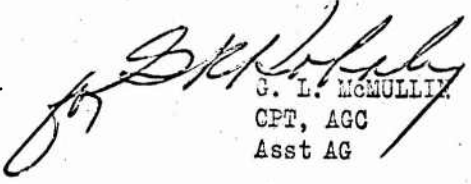
GPOP-OT(13 Nov 66) 4th Ind (U)  
SUBJECT: Operational Report-Lessons Learned for the Period Ending  
31 October 1966 (RCS CSFOR-65), HQ 54th Arty Gp

HQ, US ARMY, PACIFIC, APO San Francisco 96558 24 FEB 1967

TO: Assistant Chief of Staff for Force Development, Department of the  
Army, Washington, D. C. 20310

This headquarters concurs in the basic report as indorsed.

FOR THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF:

  
G. L. McMULLEN  
CPT, AGC  
Asst AG

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